

Parent Notification

Per the California Healthy Youth Act (adopted on October 1, 2015), as of January 1, 2016, California requires comprehensive sexuality education be taught at least once in middle school and once in high school.

In California, parents/guardians must be notified if their child is going to receive sexuality education at the beginning of the school year or at least 14 days before instruction begins, allowing parents time to review all curricula/teaching materials and decide if their child will participate. If a parent does not want their child to participate, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school and the child should be given an alternative assignment. The law states that districts/schools may not send out a permission slip or “opt-in” letter. A sample parent/guardian notification letter that you may adapt is located in the Appendix.

Minors' Sexual and Reproductive Rights in California

At the printing of this edition of Teen Talk MS, minors of **ANY AGE** in California may consent for medical care related to the prevention or treatment of pregnancy (California Family Code Section 6925). That includes consenting to birth control and abortion services. However, minors must be 12 years of age or older in order to consent to their own STI testing and treatment (California Family Code Section 6925). Additionally, public schools in California may **not** require parent permission to excuse a minor during the school hours for confidential services, which include appointments for sexual and reproductive services. (66 Ops. California Atty. Gen. 244 (1983); 87 Ops. California Atty. Gen. 168 (2004).)

Teen Talk MS includes information on youth sexual and reproductive health resources and clinics for the different geographic regions of the San Francisco Bay Area in California (Peninsula, San Francisco, East Bay, and South Bay). It is an essential part of any good comprehensive sexuality education program to provide students with information on where to obtain sexual and reproductive health care, such as birth control, pregnancy testing, STI testing and treatment, etc. If you live outside of the Bay Area, please create your own list of local sexual and reproductive health services (including name, location, phone number, and website if available), while paying close attention to teen-friendly clinics or clinics that are tailored to the specific needs of adolescents.

In California, teens qualify for Family Planning, Access, Care and Treatment or Family PACT. Family PACT is state-sponsored insurance that provides no-cost family planning services. Be sure to tell your students not only where to obtain these services but that these services are often free, confidential and do **not** require parental consent.